

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

[Home](#)[> Research Program](#)[> Responses to Information Requests](#)

Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website. Please note that some RIRs have attachments which are not electronically accessible. To obtain a PDF copy of an RIR attachment please email Basesdedonnees.DatabaseUnit@irb-cisr.gc.ca.

9 December 2014

HND104994.E

Honduras: Information on the structure and hierarchy of main gangs; gang recruitment of children (2012-November 2014)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

1. Overview of Gangs

Sources indicate that the main gangs operating in Honduras are Mara Salvatrucha [MS-13] and Mara 18 [Barrio 18 or M-18] (AFP 9 Oct. 2014; Senior Fellow 2 Dec. 2014; ACAN-EFE 23 Oct. 2014). According to a 2012 report produced by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), MS-13 has about 7,000 gang members in Honduras, and M-18 about 5,000 (UN Sept. 2012, 27, 28). According to the same report, as of 2012, there were 149 gang members overall per 100,000 inhabitants in Honduras (ibid., 29). In correspondence with the Research Directorate, a senior fellow at the Institute of International Relations at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago who specializes in security issues in Central America, including gangs, said that there are approximately 36,000 gang members in Honduras (Senior Fellow 2 Dec. 2014). According to the association Share with the Children of Honduras (Asociación Compartir con los Niños y Niñas de Honduras), a not-for-profit organization that advances the rights of children in vulnerable situations in Honduras (Asociación Compartir n.d.a), adolescents and young people who are involved in gang activities in Honduras belong to one of 475 gangs (ibid. n.d.b). According to Casa Alianza Honduras, an NGO that advances the rights of vulnerable children and young people in Honduras (Casa Alianza Sept. 2014, 4), the exact number of gang members is unknown but the proportion is estimated at 49 percent for MS-13, 48 percent for M-18, and 3 percent for other gangs (ibid. Apr. 2014, 22). ACAN-EFE, a Central American news agency co-founded by the Spanish news agency Agencia EFE (Agencia EFE n.d.), quotes the Director of the National Directorate of Criminal Investigation (Dirección Nacional de Investigación Criminal, DNIC) of the National Police of Honduras as saying that [translation] "more than 10,000" children and young people are part of gangs in the country (ACAN-EFE 23 Oct. 2013).

In correspondence with the Research Directorate, Peter Peetz, Head of Finances and Administration at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA) (GIGA n.d.b) [1], who specializes in youth gangs in Central America and political, economic and social development in Honduras (GIGA n.d.a), indicated that MS-13 and M-18

are not only criminal organizations but also identity groups in the sense of (juvenile) sub-cultures. A strong identification of gang members with their mara is expressed through specific tattoos, a specific slang, specific graffiti art, and specific hand signs mara members use to show their loyalty to the gang. (Peetz 13 Nov. 2014)

Similarly, the Senior Fellow indicated that

[t]here is general agreement that most gangs have a name and some sense of identity that can sometimes be indicated by symbols such as clothing, graffiti, and hand signs that are unique to the gang. Unique tattoos are

one of the most identifiable traits, as well as the use of special hand signals to communicate with one another. Graffiti is used to mark a gang's territory. (2 Dec. 2014)

Sources indicate that MS-13 has a specific language (InSight Crime n.d.b; UN Sept. 2012, 27) comprised of hand signals and slang (ibid.). A dictionary of the maras and gangs' slang [2], which was compiled in a report produced by the Spanish Refugee Aid Commission (Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado, CEAR), an NGO that [translation] "promotes the human rights and integral development of refugees, stateless persons, and migrants in need of international protection or facing risk of social exclusion" (CEAR n.d.), is attached to this Response. Sources indicate that MS-13 also has its own code of conduct (ibid. 28 Jan. 2013, 59; InSight n.d.b). The code of conduct of MS-13, which, according to the CEAR report, is similar to that of M-18, is as follows:

[translation]

- If you erase the tattoo [*placa*] that identifies your gang (a name, a letter or a number), your punishment will be death.
- If you wound or kill a gang mate [*hommie*] for any non-authorized reason, you will be held responsible for anything that happens to you. If you try to flee, your punishment will be death.
- If you insult the gang, you will be beaten [*chequeo*] and will be required to execute a mission assigned by the leader to right your wrong [*limpiar chaqueta*].
- If a gang mate is killed by a member from another gang, we will search for the killer. If we do not find him, we will kill [*da pa'bajo*] two members from that gang.
- From the moment you join the gang [*brincado*], you must tattoo the name of the gang on your body.
- If you desert the gang, your punishment will be death. (Gallego Martínez qtd. in CEAR 28 Jan. 2013, 59)

Sources indicate, however, that gang members are using tattoos less often in order to evade recognition by authorities (AFP 9 Oct. 2014; *El Herald* 6 Aug. 2014b) or to avoid being detected by rival gang members who may torture them to obtain information (ibid.). A document explaining the meaning of some of the tattoos used by maras and other gangs is attached to this Response.

2. Internal Structure of Gangs

In a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, an independent researcher who has researched gangs in Central America indicated that even though gangs have a strong hierarchical structure, individual cliques within the maras continue to be autonomous (17 Nov. 2014). InSight Crime, a foundation that conducts research on organized crime in Latin America and the Caribbean (InSight Crime n.d.a), indicates that MS-13 is hierarchical but not well organized and it has cliques all over Central America, Mexico and the US (ibid. n.d.b). Peetz indicated that

[t]he maras are organised locally (on the level of urban neighborhoods) in so-called "cliquas" [cliques]. The internal structure can differ substantially from cliqua to cliqua but it is generally assumed that in most cliquas there is a strong hierarchical order between gang leaders, other gang members and juveniles that aspire to become members but have not yet been accepted by the gang. There is no established knowledge in which way these local structures of a mara interact with each other. ... Most probably, the degree of being part of a hierarchical structure may vary from cliqua to cliqua. (13 Nov. 2014)

The UNODC indicates that M-18 is divided into cliques that are "more or less independent from each other" (UN Sept. 2012, 28).

2.1 Leaders

The UNODC report indicates that gang members with the longest experience within the gangs are known as *maras permanentes* (permanent maras) (ibid., 27). The CEAR report indicates that *veteranos* (veterans) or *miembros de la base dura* (members of the hard-core base) are [translation] "generally the oldest and the most violent and tattooed members" (28 Jan. 2013, 14). The UNODC report indicates that leaders of the 15 most powerful M-18 cliques in the country form the *rueda de barrio* (UN Sept. 2012, 28). The UNODC report also indicates that the nine leaders of the most powerful MS-13 cliques form the *Comisión* (committee) and have the power to activate the *luz verde* (green light) to kill a gang member "found guilty of insubordination" (ibid., 27). Also, the CEAR report indicates that gangs have several leaders of [translation] "great prestige" known as *mero mero*, *mero queso* or *big palabra* and together they form the *dirección general* (director general) or *jenga* (28 Jan. 2013, 14). A man identified as a former MS-13 gang member and interviewed by Agence France-Presse (AFP) stated that the [translation] "supreme leaders" who are incarcerated are known as *ranflero nacional* and they continue to be in charge of MS-13 (9 Oct. 2014).

Sources indicate that leaders of local MS-13 cliques are known as *palabrer*os ["loosely translated as 'those who have the word'" (InSight Crime n.d.b)] (InSight Crime n.d.b; UN Sept. 2012, 27), *cabecillas* (ringleaders), or *ranfleros* (ibid.). InSight Crime explains that "most cliques" within MS-13 have a *primera palabra* and a *segunda palabra*, which refer to the first and second-in-command, respectively (InSight Crime n.d.b). The CEAR report indicates that the *primera palabra* may also be known in some gangs as *gran m*ister, *leader*, or *ramfla*, and the *segunda palabra* as *m*ister (28 Jan. 2013, 14). The UNODC report indicates that the internal hierarchy of M-18 cliques consists of a leader who is known as *ranflero*, and the leader's close partners, who are known as *llaveros* (Sept. 2012, 28). According to InSight Crime, when the *primera palabra* is arrested, the *segunda palabra* takes control over the clique (InSight Crime n.d.b). Sources indicate that every clique leader maintains control of their clique, even from afar (ibid.; Independent Researcher 17 Nov. 2014). The former MS-13 gang member interviewed by AFP indicated that a leader of a clique carries out a weekly meeting to plan extortions, homicides and other crimes, and assigns each gang member his missions for that particular week (9 Oct. 2014).

The CEAR report indicates that [translation] "the majority" of gang leaders are in prison and are known as *pintones*; from there they coordinate, through the use of messages (*cometas* [kites] or *wilas* [written messages]), all the actions committed by the gangs (28 Jan. 2013, 14). Sources indicate that imprisoned gang members organize their operations from jails (UN Sept. 2012, 27; InSight Crime n.d.b). InSight Crime reports that the prison system has given incarcerated gang members a sense of "freedom and safety" that they otherwise would not enjoy outside (ibid.). According to Peetz, "it is widely assumed that mass incarceration of mara members has increased the cohesion of the two maras because in prison, members of cliques from many different localities are forced to live together" (Peetz 13 Nov. 2014). Peetz adds that "in Honduran prisons, members of MS-13 are always separated from members of M-18 because the two gangs fight each other very brutally" (ibid.).

According to the Senior Fellow,

[p]rison gangs are highly structured criminal networks that operate within prison systems in the region. They pose a serious national and regional threat, particularly those that affiliate with and maintain substantial influence over street gangs in the communities in which they operate. Released members typically return to their home communities and resume their former street gang affiliations and perform criminal acts on behalf of the prison gang. (2 Dec. 2014)

2.2 Other Levels of Clique Membership

Sources indicate that gang members whose function is to kill are known as *sicarios* (hired assassins) (CEAR 28 Jan. 2013, 14; UN Sept. 2012, 27) or *gatilleros* (gunmen) (ibid.). The UNODC report indicates that those who have less experience and power within MS-13 cliques are known as *simpatizantes* (sympathizers) or *novatos* (novices) (ibid.). The same source reports that within M-18, less experienced members are known as *soldados* (soldiers), and they obey the *llaveros*; the *chequeos* are the new recruits (ibid., 28). The CEAR report indicates that novatos are those who recently joined the gang and that they are trained by a *tutor* (CEAR 28 Jan. 2013, 15). Novatos execute actions such as killing a member from a rival gang or a police officer to obtain [translation] "prestige" within the gang (ibid.). The CEAR report also differentiates between *simpatizantes* and *aspirantes* (candidates), young people who are attracted to a gang but whose proximity to it determines whether they are one or the other (ibid.). Aspirantes who successfully pass the recruitment ritual (*ritual marero* or *bautizo marero* or *brincado*) become novatos (ibid.).

3. Activities

Sources indicate that gangs send some of their members to university to study and obtain a degree (Guerrero 6 Oct. 2014; *La Prensa* 26 Aug. 2013). In an interview with *La Prensa*, a San Pedro Sula-based newspaper, Edgardo Galdámez, former chief of the Maras and Gangs Unit of the Police, indicated that gangs pay university tuition fees for some of their members so they can obtain a degree in law, medicine, or business administration and later assist the gang (ibid.). The officer indicated that gangs have [translation] "at their service police officers, military officers, prosecutors, lawyers, administrators, physicians, and even judges" (ibid.). Sources report that gangs have health professionals, lawyers (*La Tribuna* 12 Aug. 2014; *El Heraldo* 6 Aug. 2014a), engineers, architects and information technology specialists among their ranks (ibid.). Galdámez further indicated that gangs have accountants who legalize their assets, treasurers, and business administrators who detail all financial transactions; if they try to cheat the gang or a gang member, they are punished with death (*La Prensa* 26 Aug. 2013). According to officials from the DNIC and the Maras and Gangs Unit who were interviewed by *La Prensa*, gangs invest in urban public transit, taxis, and in small and medium-sized companies (ibid.). CEAR indicates that gangs support political parties, human rights organizations, and the Church to [translation] "seek allies who can mediate with the government" (28 Jan. 2013, 24). The Senior Fellow indicated that gangs also fund political parties, interfere with the justice system, and provide

"alternative governance within existing national territories" (Senior Fellow 2 Dec. 2014). He added that gangs "are becoming aware of their potential political power, based on territorial control and their ability to deliver large numbers of votes to preferred candidates. In some cases they are evolving to resemble organized crime syndicates more than street gangs" (ibid.). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response.

Sources indicate that other activities of gangs include extortion, drug trafficking, vehicle theft (*La Tribuna* 17 Aug. 2014; *El Heraldo* 6 Aug. 2014b) and kidnapping (ibid.). Gangs also force people to flee their homes to occupy and use them as places to torture and kill people (ibid.; *La Tribuna* 2 Oct. 2014). Sources say that dismemberment of bodies takes place in these houses (ibid. 1 Sept. 2014; AFP 9 Oct. 2014). These houses are known as "casas locas" (ibid.; *La Tribuna* 2 Oct. 2014). Sources indicate that some cliques or gangs are transnational (Senior Fellow 2 Dec. 2014; InSight Crime n.d.b). According to sources, gangs have been providing services to transnational drug organizations (UN Sept. 2012, 27; InSight Crime n.d.b) to sell drugs in their territories, intimidate rivals, and act as murderers-for-hire (ibid.).

4. Recruitment of Children

El Heraldo, a Tegucigalpa-based newspaper, reports that recruitment of children starts at the age of nine (6 Aug. 2014b). The independent researcher indicated that it can commence at the ages of seven or eight (17 Nov. 2014) whereas *La Prensa* reports that it can start at the ages of six or seven (6 Sept. 2013a). The chief of the National Anti-extortion Force (Fuerza Nacional Antiextorsión, FNA) in San Pedro Sula stated in an interview with *La Prensa* that children are recruited by gangs because they are not subject to criminal prosecution (ABC 7 May 2014). The chief of the FNA also mentioned that some gang members are dedicated to the recruitment of children (ibid.).

Sources indicate that gangs use children and young people as *mulas* (drug couriers) (Casa Alianza Apr. 2014, 4), *banderas* (watchmen of activities in the area of influence), and assassins (ibid.; *La Prensa* 6 Sept. 2013b). The chief of the FNA said that children are used as informants, drug couriers, and collectors of extortions (ABC 7 May 2014). A police officer of the FNA stated in an interview with *La Tribuna*, a newspaper based in Tegucigalpa, that children are also used in the dismemberment of bodies (3 Nov. 2014).

Peetz said that gang recruitment generally takes place in a "more or less forced, non-voluntary way" (13 Nov. 2014). The independent researcher noted that, even though forced recruitment takes place, it is hard to distinguish between forced and voluntary recruitment as [translation] "it is very difficult not to have contact with gangs or not join them" (17 Nov. 2014). Sources believe that children and young people may see joining a gang as the only option in the violent environment that surrounds them (InSight Crime n.d.b; Casa Alianza Apr. 2014, 5). Peetz indicated that adolescents also join gangs because they see this as "the only protection against gang violence [as well as] violence exerted by other actors, such as security forces, organized crime, etc." (13 Nov. 2014). The Senior Fellow indicated that "[t]o members, these gangs offer acceptance and a sense of [...] street security, a surrogate family, power and control over themselves, others, and life situations [and] easier access to money" (2 Dec. 2014). *El Heraldo* reports that children are told that the gang will provide for them and their families and that they will be part of a [translation] "real family" (6 Aug. 2014b). A 2014 Casa Alianza Honduras report on children and youth involvement with gangs in Tegucigalpa indicates that gang members pose as a friend, or the father, mother or brother that potential child recruits never had, and they say they will provide them with support when needed (Apr. 2014, 29). Sources indicate that gang members offer children and young people clothes (ABC 10 May 2014; Casa Alianza Apr. 2014, 29), drugs, and financial support; to young men, specifically, they offer women, weapons and cars (ibid.). According to Casa Alianza Honduras, children and young people are also offered [translation] "money and power," and they see these incentives as "positive" when considering the option of joining a gang (Apr. 2014, 5). Sources indicate that a recruit joins a gang either by undergoing the *brincado* [a noun], also known as *brincar* [a verb] or by killing someone (AFP 9 Oct. 2014; Independent Researcher 17 Nov. 2014). The *brincado* consists of a "violent" beating by other clique members, during 13 seconds for MS-13 and 18 seconds for M-18 (AFP 9 Oct. 2014). It is also called *ritual* (ritual) or *bautizo marero* (gang christening) (CEAR 28 Jan. 2013, 15). According to the Senior Fellow, new recruits "are pressured by peers to learn to display courage and show no fear, to establish their individual reputation, to defend it, and above all to appreciate the effectiveness of violence and threats to achieve their aims" (2 Dec. 2014).

Sources indicate that recruitment happens at schools (Independent Researcher 17 Nov. 2014; *La Prensa* 6 Sept. 2013a). *La Prensa* reports that several public and private schools in San Pedro Sula have closed due to the [translation] "massive desertion of students" as well as the "high number of assaults, extortions and threats against students" (6 Sept. 2013b). *El Heraldo* reports that the Departmental Division of Education of Francisco Morazán revealed in July 2013 that [translation] "approximately" 360 schools were under threat by gangs (30 Sept. 2014). The newspaper also reports that, on 30 September 2014, a school in Tegucigalpa suspended classes after [translation] "several" teachers reportedly received threats by gangs on their personal phones (ibid.). *La Prensa* reports that 15 students from one school in Chamelecón were killed by gangs in

2012, with the majority of them decapitated (*La Prensa* 6 Sept. 2013b). Corroborating information could not be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate within the time constraints of this Response. *ABC*, a Madrid-based newspaper, quotes the Ministry of Education as indicating that of the 4,500 minors who dropped out of school in San Pedro Sula during 2013, about half of them did so because of pressure from gangs (10 May 2014). A monthly report for September 2014 produced by Casa Alianza Honduras indicates that gangs were reportedly responsible for 15 out of 72 violent deaths of people under the age of 23 that occurred during that month (Sept. 2014, 41).

Sources indicate that the punishment for desertion of a gang is the death of the deserter (InSight Crime n.d.; Casa Alianza Apr. 2014, 30; AFP 9 Oct. 2014) or of members of his or her family (ibid.; Casa Alianza Apr. 2014, 30). Casa Alianza Honduras reports that children and young recruits are forced to stay with the gang under threats of being killed or of their families being killed (ibid.). *La Prensa* reports that the same threats apply to children to force them to join a gang (6 Sept. 2013a). The Senior Fellow indicated that "the price of membership is that members have to defend to the death the name and honour of the gang" (2 Dec. 2014). Sources report the [translation] "wave" of killings of 17 minors in May 2014, some for refusing to join gangs, including a 7 year old child who was found dead with signs of torture (*La Prensa*.pe 6 May 2014; *ABC* 7 May 2014). *ABC* reports that the brother of the child, a 13 year old, was also found dead the previous day (ibid.). *ABC* quotes an official from the Office of the Prosecutor for Crimes Against Life (Fiscalía de Delitos contra la Vida) as indicating that these children were [translation] "pressured" by M-18 gang members to join them (ibid. 10 May 2014).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Notes

[1] GIGA is a research institute that employs 90 academics, who carry out social science research on "questions of global significance," including "socio-economic development in the context of globalisation," in four regions of the world: Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East (GIGA n.d.c).

[2] According to a 2014 US Congressional Research Service report, "[w]hen referring to gangs in Central America, some studies use the term *pandillas* and *maras* interchangeably, while others distinguish between the two. Studies that make a distinction between the two types of Central America gangs generally define *pandillas* as localized groups that have long been present in the region, and *maras* as a more recent phenomenon that has some transnational roots" (US 20 Feb. 2014, 2).

References

ABC. 10 May 2014. Manuel M. Cascante. "Las maras de Honduras matan a los niños que no se unen a la banda." <<http://www.abc.es/internacional/20140510/abci-maras-honduras-matan-ninos-201405092000.html>> [Accessed 3 Nov. 2014]

_____. 7 May 2014. "Conmoción en Honduras por los casos de niños asesinados por negarse a entrar en las 'maras'." <<http://www.abc.es/internacional/20140507/abci-conmocion-honduras-casos-ninos-201405070842.html>> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2014]

ACAN-EFE. 23 October 2014. "Más de 10 mil menores han sido reclutados por bandas criminales en Honduras." <http://www.prensalibre.com/internacional/Mas-10mil-menores-reclutados-bandas-criminales-Honduras_0_1235276704.html> [Accessed 3 Nov. 2014]

Agence France-Presse (AFP). 9 October 2014. "El submundo de las temidas maras." <<http://www.elnuevodiario.com.ni/internacionales/331885-submundo-de-temidas-maras>> [Accessed 3 Nov. 2014]

Agencia EFE. N.d. "Historia de la agencia EFE." <<http://www.efe.com/efe/queesefe/historia/espana/1>> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2014]

Asociación Compartir con los Niños y Niñas de Honduras. N.d.a. "Misión y visión." <http://www.compartirhonduras.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=58&lang=en&121377ef340e9cec1ee177f9f78d4ed1=6d037ea5596255c5eb51379339a8c908> [Accessed 5 Nov. 2014]

_____. N.d.b. "Modelo comunitario de prevención, atención y reinserción integral de adolescentes y jóvenes que participan o simpatizan con 'Maras' y pandillas." <http://www.compartirhonduras.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=56&Itemid=72&lang=en> [Accessed 5 Nov. 2014]

Casa Alianza Honduras. September 2014. *Informe mensual de la situación de los derechos de los niños, niñas y jóvenes en Honduras*. <http://www.casa-alianza.org.hn/images/documentos/Informes/Inf.2014/9.%20informe%20mensual%20septiembre%202014_casa%20alianza%20honduras.pdf> [Accessed 30 Oct. 2014]

_____. April 2014. *Niñez y juventud en las redes del crimen organizado, una aproximación a las principales formas de involucramiento y participación de niñas, niños y jóvenes en los grupos delictivos de Tegucigalpa*. <http://www.casa-alianza.org.hn/images/documentos/Informes.Especiales/Inf.2014/1.%20informe%20niez%20y%20crimen%20organizado%20en%20tegucigalpa_cah.pdf> [Accessed 30 Oct. 2014]

Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR). 28 January 2013. Rebeca García Bravo. *Maras en Centroamérica y México (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panamá, El Salvador)*. <<http://cear.es/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/CENTROAMERICA.-2013.-Maras.pdf>> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2014]

_____. N.d. "Valores y misión." <<http://www.cear.es/quienes-somos/presentacion>> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2014]

El Heraldo. 30 September 2014. "Sin clases escuela en Tegucigalpa por supuesta amenaza de mareros." <<http://www.elheraldo.hn/sucesos/752938-331/sin-clases-escuela-en-comayag%C3%BCela-por-supuesta-amenaza-de-mareros>> [Accessed 17 Nov. 2014]

_____. 6 August 2014a. "Profesionales universitarios son miembros de Mara 18." <<http://www.elheraldo.hn/pais/735969-214/profesionales-universitarios-son-miembros-de-mara-18>> [Accessed 21 Nov. 2014]

_____. 6 August 2014b. "MS-13, de mara callejera a organización transnacional." <<http://www.elheraldo.hn/alfrente/735683-331/ms-13-de-mara-callejera-a-organizaci%C3%B3n-transnacional>> [Accessed 3 Nov. 2014]

German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA). N.d.a. "Dr. Peter Peetz: Research and Teaching." <<http://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/team/peetz>> [Accessed 17 Nov. 2014]

_____. N.d.b. "Team." <http://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/team?field_lastname_value=peetz> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2014]

_____. N.d.c. "The GIGA." <<http://www.giga-hamburg.de/en/the-giga>> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2014]

Guerrero, Lizbeth. 6 October 2014. "Las maras, el imperio de las calles." *Presencia Universitaria*, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras. <<http://www.presencia.unah.edu.hn/seguridad/articulo/las-maras-el-imperio-de-las-calles>> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2014]

Independent Researcher, Oslo. 17 November 2014. Telephone interview with the Research Directorate.

InSight Crime. N.d.a. "About Us." <<http://www.insightcrime.org/about-us>> [Accessed 18 Nov. 2014]

_____. N.d.b. "MS-13." <<http://www.insightcrime.org/el-salvador-organized-crime-news/mara-salvatrucha-ms-13-profile>> [Accessed 2 Dec. 2014]

La Prensa. 6 September 2013a. Xiomara Orellana. "Sitiados centros educativos por las maras en Honduras." <<http://www.laprensa.hn/especiales/381915-273/sitiados-centros-educativos-por-las-maras-en-honduras>> [Accessed 5 Nov. 2014]

_____. 6 September 2013b. Xiomara Orellana. "A 15 jóvenes de un solo colegio han asesinado maras en 2012." <<http://www.laprensa.hn/especiales/381916-273/a-15-j%C3%B3venes-de-un-solo-colegio-han-asesinado-maras-en-2012>> [Accessed 5 Nov. 2014]

_____. 26 August 2013. "De las calles y tatuajes a criminales organizados en Honduras." <<http://www.laprensa.hn/especiales/328430-273/de-las-calles-y-tatuajes-a-criminales-organizados-en-honduras>> [Accessed 13 Nov. 2014]

Laprensa.pe. 6 May 2014. "Honduras: Ola de asesinatos de escolares conmueve a la población." <<http://laprensa.peru.com/actualidad/noticia-honduras-ola-asesinatos-escolares-conmueven-al-pais-25173>> [Accessed 17 Nov. 2014]

La Tribuna. 3 November 2014. "Menores hondureños condenados a morir o matar." <<http://www.latribuna.hn/2014/11/03/menores-hondurenos-condenados-a-morir-o-matar/>> [Accessed 3 Nov. 2014]

_____. 2 October 2014. "Policía Militar identifica más 'Casas Locas'." <<http://www.latribuna.hn/2014/10/02/policia-militar-identifica-mas-casas-locas/>> [Accessed 14 Nov. 2014]

_____. 1 September 2014. "Descuartizado encuentran cadáver de hombre en 'casa loca'." <<http://www.latribuna.hn/2014/09/01/descuartizado-encuentran-cadaver-de-hombre-en-casa-loc/>> [Accessed 14 Nov. 2014]

_____. 17 August 2014. "Pandillas en Honduras pasaron de ser un juego de niños a verdaderas amenazas para el Estado." <<http://www.latribuna.hn/2014/08/17/pandillas-en-honduras-pasaron-de-ser-un-juego-de-ninos-a-verdaderas-amenazas-para-el-estado/>> [Accessed 3 Nov. 2014]

_____. 12 August 2014. "Dentro de las maras: Abogados, médicos y administradores de empresas." <<http://www.latribuna.hn/2014/08/12/dentro-de-las-maras-abogados-medicos-y-administradores-de-empresas/>> [Accessed 21 Nov. 2014]

Peetz, Peter, German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), Hamburg. 13 November 2014. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

Senior Fellow, Institute of International Relations, University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago. 2 December 2014. Correspondence with the Research Directorate.

United Nations (UN). September 2012. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). *Transnational Organized Crime in Central America and the Caribbean: A Threat Assessment*. <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/TOC_Central_America_and_the_Caribbean_english.pdf> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2014]

United States (US). 20 February 2014. Congressional Research Service. *Gangs in Central America*. By Clare Ribando Seelke. <<http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34112.pdf>> [Accessed 3 Dec. 2014]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The following person and organization could not provide information: professor, School of Social and Political Studies, University of Glasgow; Honduras – Secretaría de Seguridad.

Attempts to contact the following organizations were unsuccessful: American University; Florida International University; Honduras – Policía Nacional; University of Southern California; Washington Office on Latin America.

Internet sites, including: *Americas Quarterly*; Amnesty International; Child Soldiers International; Comisión Nacional de los Derechos Humanos; ecoi.net; *El Tiempo*; Factiva; Freedom House; Honduras – Dirección de Lucha contra el Narcotráfico, Ministerio Público, Poder Judicial, Presidencia de la República, Secretaría de Seguridad; Human Rights Watch; The Jamestown Foundation; *Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor*; Organization of American States; Proceso Digital; Radio Progreso; Small Arms Survey; United Nations – ReliefWeb; United States – Central Intelligence Agency, Department of State, Department of the Treasury, Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Library of Congress; Washington Office on Latin America.

Attachments

1. Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR). 28 January 2013. Rebeca García Bravo. "Anexo III. Diccionario del argot de los mareros y pandilleros" (Annex III. Mara and Pandilla Slang Dictionary). In *Maras en Centroamérica y México (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panamá, El Salvador)* (Maras in Central America and Mexico (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, El Salvador). Translated by the Translation Bureau, Public Works and Government Services Canada. <<http://cear.es/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/CENTROAMERICA.-2013.-Maras.pdf>> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2014]

2. Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (CEAR). 28 January 2013. Rebeca García Bravo. "Anexo VI. Interpretación de tatuajes en el contexto de maras y pandillas" (Annex VI. Interpretation of Gang Tattoos). In *Maras en Centroamérica y México (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panamá, El Salvador)* (Maras in Central America and Mexico (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, El Salvador). Translated by the Translation Bureau, Public Works and Government Services Canada. <<http://cear.es/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/CENTROAMERICA.-2013.-Maras.pdf>> [Accessed 31 Oct. 2014]

[Tips on how to use this search engine.](#)

[Top of Page](#)

Date modified: 2014-06-11

The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.